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A Study on Effectiveness of Teachers Imparting Communication Skills to Students of Engineering Colleges

Dr. Harish Shukla

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Abstract

This research article is an attempt to study the effectiveness of teachers in imparting communication skills to students of engineering colleges of Indore District to enhance communication skills of future engineers. The object of the research article is to know the perception of students about how effective teachers are and also the facilities such as language laboratory, software, computers, audio-visual aids, teaching-learning environment, and opportunities for oral and written communication used by teachers in teaching of communication skills.

Introduction

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In the Indian context, an engineering students' success in the on-campus as well as in the off-campus is based on their demonstration of communication skills. According to NASCOM former President, Karnik only 25% of technical graduates are suitable for employment in the organisation in India because they lack abilities to speak or write well in English. Most students are not 'industry ready' (Infosys 2008). It is very essential for the engineering students who want to join the industry that they enrich their communication skills and soft skills and develop an ability to learn on their own and learn to work in a team.

Oral presentations are an integral part of an engineer's career. He has to take part in meeting, seminar, and conferences. As an effective public speaker, he can not only enhance his own reputation but also the reputation of the organisation where he works.(Bhatia and Sheikh, 2001)

In the era of globalisation, we can not meet the international standards without ensuring quality teaching to the students in the institutes particularly technical institutes. Since technical education plays a very crucial role in the overall development of a nation, the researcher got inspired to choose the topic for study related to engineering institutes. The present status of higher education in India is a matter of discussion. It still needs a lot of improvement. The quality of higher education depends primarily on quality manpower in these colleges particularly teachers who teach and make students practice communication skills. There are large numbers of engineering colleges in Indore. The topic has been taken for the research purpose because a little work has been done. The results of the present study can be helpful directly or indirectly to the persons and bodies concerned. Top management of these colleges can ensure better facilities to improve communication skills of students of their colleges. Results can also be helpful to revise curriculum by the universities and also they can be helpful for teachers to know the feedback of their performance.

Review of Related Literature

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Albert P'Rayan and Ramakrishna T. Shetty (2008) worked to measure the communication apprehension of 120 students at Jeppiar Engineering College and also speaking tests were administered to the same students to assess their public speaking skills. The results revealed that majority of the students have high communication apprehension and around 60% students lack communication skills.

David H. Culpepper, Jess D, Beeler and K.G.Burke (2006) in their study examine a model for improving the oral communication skills of business students.

Stivers, Campbell and Hermanson (2000) found that employers identified oral communication skills as very important.

Rubin and Jordan (1997) report a semester-long communication course significantly improves the performance on communication assignments and lowers the fear of public speaking or writing for an audience.

Du-Babcock (2006) stated that teaching business communication theory and models without associated application materials is inadequate and will lead to students not being capable of applying communication skills in the future.

According to **Fraser et al**, (2005) Enhancement of teaching and learning has been an important objective of business schools for many years. There are a number of ways to achieve this objective, but assessing the impact of teaching by measuring outcomes remains a major feedback method. "Outcome-based evaluation, as it is commonly called, has been increasingly invoked as a way of assessing... teaching effectiveness".

Bottom, (2005) concluded that Business schools should "practice the same kind of silo-busting research and teaching that we long ago advocated to managers with great success". Surely it becomes easier for students to put the pieces together and approach issues with a multi-disciplinary perspective when those behaviours have been modelled by their business faculty.

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Objectives

1. To study the adequacy of the facilities available in the institutes to improve communication skills of students.
2. To study effective use of language lab software by teachers.
3. To know the satisfaction of students about performance of teachers.
4. To know the awareness of teachers related to latest development about contents of the subject.
5. To study the effectiveness with which teacher deliver contents of syllabus of communication skills to students.
6. To know the opportunities provided by teachers to students for oral presentation.
7. To know the effectiveness of teaching learning environment in the institutes.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the study is area of research. In the present study selected colleges from Indore Districts have been taken for collection of data. Filled up questionnaires in all the respects were collected from 178 students of different classes of various engineering colleges.

Research Methodology

The present study is exploratory in nature. The total number of samples collected from different respondents of engineering colleges through survey is 178. Samples are collected from selected colleges of Indore District. The Simple Random Sampling Method is used for the collection of data. A self developed questionnaire is used with yes and no types of responses for collecting data. Questionnaires that were incomplete, unrealistic, full of biasness were rejected at a glance so that error could not occur in the

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sample collected and it might not affect findings of the study. The method of percentage analysis is used for the analysis and interpretation of data.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of the data collected from the respondents reveal that the only 50% students feel satisfied with overall effectiveness of measures taken by Engineering Colleges to enhance their communication skills. 62% students feel that they do not get proper opportunities for oral presentation in the class/lab. 54% students feel that teachers need to remain updated with the latest knowledge of their subjects. Most of the students feel lack of motivation by teachers and they also feel that frequency of group discussions is not enough. A-V aids are not adequately used by teachers. 63% students feel that they do not get adequate chances for public speaking. 67% students are not satisfied with the internet facility available in their colleges. Most of the students feel that teachers need to improve delivery of content of syllabus and also they feel that they do not get feedback for their performance regularly. One very interesting finding is that 56% students find that the teaching-learning environment is not satisfactory in their institutes.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that overall effectiveness of teachers imparting communication skills to the the engineering students is not satisfactory. Since the job prospects for the students are dependent on their demonstrating good communication skills, students can not grab the opportunities of job. Colleges are still lacking important facilities that are essential for the students. This can hamper the chances of growth of colleges as well as students in this world of cut throat competitions. Teachers have to be very effective so that objective of technical education in India can be achieved successfully.

Suggestions

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On the basis of the findings of the study, following suggestions are proposed to improve the effectiveness of teachers of engineering colleges imparting communication skills to their students.

Teachers should provide adequate chances to students for oral presentations. They should be aware of the latest developments taking place in their subject. They should continually motivate students for better communication. A-V aids should be used effectively and regularly. Colleges should provide better internet facility. Public speaking should be promoted. Reading facilities in the libraries of the institutes should be enriched. Teachers should go in the class and laboratory with very good preparation. The most important suggestion is that the overall teaching learning environment should be healthy so that students learn well and fast and command over their communication skills to achieve success in interviews.

Scope for Future Studies

The area of research can be extended from District level to State level. It can rather be extended to National level by other researchers. Significance can be added to the results by some researcher by taking larger sample of employees from larger number of colleges.

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Appendix

Instruction: Please tick in the suitable box

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| S.No. | Item | Yes | No |
|-------|--|-----|----|
| 1 | Are the facilities to improve communication skills of students adequate? | Yes | No |
| 2 | Do you have a language lab software? | Yes | No |
| 3 | Is the software effective? | Yes | No |
| 4 | Are you satisfied with performance of teachers? | Yes | No |
| 5 | Do the teachers provide you proper opportunities for oral presentation? | Yes | No |
| 6 | Do the teachers provide you proper opportunities for written communication? | Yes | No |
| 7 | Are the teachers aware of latest developments related to communication skills? | Yes | No |
| 8 | Are you motivated by teachers to improve communication skills? | Yes | No |
| 9 | Group discussions are often held by the teachers. | Yes | No |
| 10 | Do the teachers use innovative methods of teaching? | Yes | No |
| 11 | Do teachers deliver contents of subject effectively? | Yes | No |
| 12 | Audio visual aids are used sufficiently by the teacher. | Yes | No |
| 13 | Is public speaking promoted in the class/lab? | Yes | No |
| 14 | Are you satisfied with internet facility? | Yes | No |
| 15 | Do you get feedback for your performance by the teachers? | Yes | No |
| 16 | Are you satisfied with teaching learning environment? | Yes | No |

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